FIDEL CASTRO

Speech

30th ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATTACK ON THE MONCADA GARRISON

Santiago de Cuba, 26th of July, 1983

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SPEECH DELIVERED BY COMMANDER IN CHIEF FIDEL CASTRO RUZ, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA AND PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF STATIE AND OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, AT THE MAIN CEREMONY MARKING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATTACK ON THE MONCADA GARRISON.

CITY OF SANTIAGO DE CUBA,
SANTIAGO DE CUBA PROVINCE.
JULY 26, 1983,
"YEAR OF THE
30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
MONCADA"

Distinguished Guests;
People of Santiago;
Compatriots Throughout the Country:

I WROTE this speech in order to prevent the emotions aroused by the date we're celebrating, this afternoon's heat, the magnitude of this rally and the effort involved in improvising from clouding the ideas involved and upsetting the balance of my statements. Our people awaited this anniversary with affection, enthusiasm, joy and fervor. For me and, for all the other survivors of the attack on the Moncada, it is a unique experience to meet 30 years later with the people of Santiago to commemorate the date on which our generation embarked on the course of our country's definitive liberation. None of those who preceded us in our people's long struggle for independence, freedom and justice enjoyed such a privilege. It is fitting that we bow our heads in tribute to those who showed us the way, those who from 1868 on have led our people on the road to revolution and made our Revolution possible with their lives, their sacrifice and their heroism, often with no other reward but the bitterness of setbacks and the seemingly infinite, unattainable distance between their efforts and their goal.

Unquestionably, those of us who are with you today are not the same as we were then, for we had to live through these 30 years of rich, unimaginable experience in order to be able to acquire the knowledge and the maturity that only the school of the Revolution itself is capable of teaching. Then, everything seemed to be a dream and armed with those dreams we began our struggle. We were even called dreamers by many of our contemporaries, who were not completely convinced that the future of our country could be changed and was inexorably bound to change.

Long before then Martí had said: "The real man does not take into account on what side life is most enjoyable but rather on what side duty calls. He is the only practical man, whose dream of today will be the law of tomorrow, for he who has looked into the entrails of the world and has seen the peoples flaming and bloody in the crucible of centuries

knows that, without exception, the future is on the side of duty." (APPLAUSE)

There is only one way in which we are the same as on July 26, 1953: we have the same faith in the future of our country, the same confidence in our people's virtues, the same sureness of victory, the same capacity to dream of everything that will come true tomorrow, above and beyond the dreams come true today. (APPLAUSE)

In those days even we ourselves were unable to appraise the full magnitude of the stage of history that was being born. Revolutionary fighters usually just carry out their duty, giving no thought to either history or glory. Seen now in perspective and in light of the events that have taken place in the last three decades, the struggle that was begun on that morning in Santiago de Cuba would lead to victory a process that had been evolving for almost a century.

The revolution for independence begun at Yara in October 1868 ended with the Zanjón Peace Treaty, after ten years of extraordinarily heroic struggle against overwhelming odds.

The revolution begun in Baire in February 1895 was tragically cut short by the military intervention of the United States and the establishment of the shameful status of Yankee neocolonial domination legalized by the odious Platt Amendment. The right to intervene in our country, to our humiliation, was included in the Constitution of the Republic.

In these wars of independence, at a time when our population was only about one and a half million, our people fought for many long years against an army of over 300 000 Spanish soldiers — which will give us an idea of the magnitude and heroism of their effort.

The struggles waged in the so-called republican stage and the revolution of 1933 also ended in the frustration of the Cuban people's most cherished aspirations and the further consolidation of imperialist domination over our country.

Eighty-five years after Yara, our struggle was renewed with the attack on the Moncada Garrison and on January 1, 1959, the final liberation of our country was achieved.

The fortress did not fall with the first attack, but it crumbled five and a half years later and with it the entire military apparatus of the odious tyranny that served as the foundation for the regime of exploitation and imperialist domination that existed in Cuba.

How different the names of Céspedes, Agramonte, Gómez, Maceo, Martí, Mella, Villena, Guiteras, Jesús Menéndez and other beloved figures of our history sound now! (AP-

PLAUSE) And today they are joined by those of Abel, Frank, Camilo, Che and so many others of the most recent generation of heroes. (APPLAUSE)

But when we began our struggle on July 26, 1953, it was only with a feeling of embarrassment that we were able to recall our own history, for the work was still incomplete. The invocation of our heroes by sellout, corrupt politicians was practically a daily offense. A false version of our history was taught in our schools and those who robbed us of our freedom in 1898 were depicted as our country's liberators.

Even our beautiful history of struggles had to be restored. However, we found the source and the inspiration for our struggles in the insuperable example set by our glorious predecessors, in their intelligent, heroic battles and in Martí's luminous thought.

Fortunately, to this we could add the knowledge and the correct interpretation, in the existing conditions, of the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin. Without them we wouldn't have been able to fully understand the world we lived in, nor find the correct strategy to be followed in the Cuba of 1953, when the mention of their names was practically forbidden in our country.

WHAT GAVE ADDED RICHNESS AND CONTENT TO THE LAST STAGE OF OUR STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION WAS THE FACT THAT A SOCIAL REVOLUTION MERGED WITH THE NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE

What gave added richness and content to the last stage of our struggle for liberation was the fact that a social revolution merged with the national liberation struggle. From the time of the Moncada attack we could conceive of no form of true revolution except a socialist revolution. Hatred of the bloodthirsty, pro-imperialist tyranny acted as the cement that drew together all our people into the battle. However, there were some who believed that the process would come to a halt on January 1, 1959, and that we would go back to the sickening political and socioeconomic system of 1952. But the Revolution did not come to a halt, nor could it. Today, 30 years after the attack on the Moncada Garrison, I can assert, as convinced as I was then, that it would have constituted an act of high treason against our homeland.

This is why today we can proclaim with legitimate pride that the blood shed on that day and in the following five and a half years, and the blood shed in almost 25 years of

Revolution was not shed in vain; it did not serve to contribute to bourgeois exploitation nor to maintain, under pseudodemocratic forms, a society where the immense majority work for a minority of exploiters and parasites, with the resulting privileges, abuse, injustice, inequality and vice inherent to such a system, which is inexorably condemned by history. In this regard we are years ahead of the other countries in Latin America, and this will some day be considered as a great historical merit for our country. (APPLAUSE)

What we have achieved in 25 years' time — and we have achieved more than any other sister nation in this hemisphere — we would have never achieved under capitalism. (APPLAUSE)

In the first years of this brief period of history we were able to do away with unemployment, illiteracy, beggary, racial discrimination, gambling, prostitution and drugs. We would like to know what other country in this hemisphere has achieved that. (APPLAUSE)

All the workers in our country are covered by a decent, fair and far-reaching social security system.

Our health system and our health indices place us at the lead of Third World nations and even above several developed countries; and within the next 20 years we shall be among the best in the world. (APPLAUSE)

We have trained over 200 000 teachers and our educational system, our teaching levels and our curricula are at the lead of the underdeveloped countries and within the next two decades will also rank among the world's best. (APPLAUSE) We have over 200 000 university students, 18 times greater than the largest figure in prerevolutionary Cuba. Every one of our 14 provinces has a center of higher education.

Thousands of new constructions, among them primary schools, children's day care centers, secondary schools and polytechnic schools, universities, hospitals, polyclinics, homes for the aged and other facilities have been built in our country.

All the land, all the mines and every plant and factory, that is, all of the country's wealth and natural resources, have been recovered. (APPLAUSE)

Our agriculture has been mechanized and modernized. Electricity now extends to practically all the rural areas in our country. There are highways and roads all over the island and hundreds of new rural communities have sprung up along with thousands of agricultural works including

dams, irrigation systems, dairies, poultry and hog farms, warehouses, machine and repair shops and other facilities.

Hundreds of new factories have been built and those under construction include our first nuclear plant, the oil refinery in Cienfuegos, the thermoelectric plant east of Havana and the nickel processing plants in Moa and Punta Gorda. Given their complex construction, importance and technological level, the last two constitute an exceptional merit for their builders and are also a source of pride for our country, since prior to the Revolution all plants in our country involving complex construction were built by foreign firms. (APPLAUSE)

The plans for our new sugar mills are drawn up in our country and more than 60 percent of these mills' components are produced here.

Dozens of planning and design enterprises have been set up and over 100 research centers have been opened. Thousands of Cuban professionals — engineers, architects, biologists, biochemists and other technicians and scientists — are working in these highly technical and scientific centers.

Culture and sports have become massive and are now the birthright of our people.

There isn't a single sphere of our economic and social life where the progress made in these years has not been significant, despite the criminal imperialist blockade and the fact that Cuba started off as a country with an underdeveloped and dependent economy.

And it's very important that the victorious Revolution was able, from the very beginning, to rally around its flag all the revolutionary, democratic, patriotic and progressive forces of the country and to create, on the basis of merit, ability and spirit of sacrifice, a solid and indestructible vanguard party that is the educator and guide of our people and the defender of its closest unity and of the principles of our revolutionary process. (APPLAUSE)

Our young people, meanwhile, have also created their powerful vanguard organization, where those who constitute the relief force of the Party are trained.

Our workers, our peasants, the residents of every block in our cities and towns, our students and even our children also organized a strong mass organization, to which practically all our people belong and which constitutes an impregnable bastion against the enemies of the Revolution. (APPLAUSE)

Never in the 25 years of existence of our revolutionary process has a soldier, a policeman or a fireman been used against our people. (APPLAUSE) This is because the people are the Revolution and the people. with their immense

power, defend themselves. (APPLAUSE) What a glaring contrast between this and the panorama we are witnessing in the Americas and in a large part of the rest of the world, where workers, peasants, students and fighters for civil rights and for peace are beaten up by the police and met with dogs, tear gas, firefighting equipment and so forth! (APPLAUSE)

Isn't it so that the capitalist world is constantly demonstrating for all of us to see what really is happening there?

The Revolution has created the necessary institutions in our country by proclaiming the socialist Constitution and by founding the National Assembly and People's Power, an experiment full of political wealth and possibilities in the social sphere, a school of self-government in which all the people participate. The functions of the state have been broadly decentralized to an extent unknown in any bourgeois regime.

Our people already have a highly developed political education, a profound knowledge of national and international problems and a spirit of solidarity and internationalism that makes us all feel proud because it is one of the Revolution's most beautiful achievements. (APPLAUSE)

REVOLUTIONARY STRENGTH AND ENTHUSIASM ARE TODAY GREATER THAN EVER, WITH THE DIFFERENCE, AS COMPARED WITH THE EARLY YEARS, THAT THE PROCESS IS NOW MORE SOLID, MORE CONSCIOUS AND MORE PROFOUND

Our Revolution proves false the myth that as time goes by all revolutionary processes lose their strength and enthusiasm. Revolutionary strength and enthusiasm are today greater than ever, with the difference, as compared with the early years, that the process is now more solid, more conscious and more profound. (APPLAUSE)

1983, which marks the 25th year of the Revolution, is the year of our greatest efficiency. In a recent analysis made by the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers we have been able to see the impressive way in which the workers have responded to the resolution of the 6th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party in confronting difficulties, conserving fuel and raw materials and boosting efficiency in production and services. This is why at a time of serious international economic crisis and in spite of severe natural disasters that afflicted the country in the first half of the year, we have had outstanding results in all activities.

Our people's working and fighting spirit nowadays is far greater than at any other time in our revolutionary process, this being a worthy tribute to the 30th anniversary of the Moncada attack and the 25th anniversary of the triumph of the Revolution, which we will celebrate next January 1. (APPLAUSE)

But have these achievements been accomplished without struggle? Can we afford to rest on our laurels and, convinced of the justness and rightness of our cause, ignore the dangers now threatening us? (SHOUTS OF "NO!") Is imperialist arrogance resigned to the successes of our Revolution and the example set by it? (SHOUTS OF "NO!") We know well that the answer is "No." Seldom has more threatening language been heard; seldom has imperialist arrogance reached more absurd heights; seldom has a U.S. ruler spoken so brutally, aggressively and wickedly in relation to Cuba. They threaten us with military blockades, they threaten us with reprisals and punishments, they threaten us with invasions. Should we be afraid? (SHOUTS OF "NO!") No. We must be prepared. (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "COMMANDER IN CHIEF, WE AWAIT YOUR ORDERS!")

Our defense efforts all these years have been substantial. It has meant the investment of considerable energy and material resources. How happy we would have been to have spent every last penny of that money on factories, housing, hospitals, schools, roads, cultural centers and recreational and sports facilities! No one can forget that during the first months of the Revolution we turned nearly all the country's army barracks into schools. (APPLAUSE) But we would have deluded ourselves in an unforgivable and fatal manner if we had neglected our defense.

Almost from the very beginning, the imperialists' plans for aggression, criminal conspiracies, smuggled weapons, acts of sabotage, counterrevolutionary bands, cynical plans to kill off the Revolution's leaders and planned mercenary invasions forced us to arm ourselves speedily, train our militia and efficiently organize and train our Revolutionary Armed Forces. (APPLAUSE)

Had we not been duly prepared, the April 1961 mercenary invasion, a prelude to foreign troops being dispatched to our homeland, could have cost hundreds of thousands of our people's lives. Because there's no question that the country would have resisted regardless of cost and whatever the price. Thanks to the steps taken in due time, we dealt the enemy a complete and crushing defeat. (APPLAUSE)

Yankee hysteria and their aim of seeking revenge led to political and military measures that ushered in, 18 months

later, the October 1962 missile crisis, which brought the world to the brink of nuclear war and ended with the U.S. commitment to give up plans to invade Cuba.

Yet imperialism never abandoned its aim to destroy the Revolution one way or another. The economic blockade was stepped up and the various forms of sabotage even included resorting to biological warfare against plantations, animals and the people themselves. However, during the long years of the Vietnam War, the imperialists — deeply submerged in that dirty war which ended in defeat and subsequent trauma — brought us some respite on the military level.

The arrival to power in the United States early in 1981 of a reactionary, extreme right clique with an openly warmongering and fascist foreign policy brought once more to the forefront the subject of military aggression against our nation.

The political philosophy of the new administration was known since before the elections in the United States. A group of haggard, ignorant, frenzied and irresponsible Reagan advisers belonging to the Santa Fe Committee had drawn up in detail the future imperial policy of the United States vis-a-vis Cuba, Central America, the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean. Cuba was to be given the alternative of yielding to the United States or else being destabilized, militarily blockaded and even invaded if necessary. Economic promises would be made to encourage us to submit. Plainly put, we were to be intimidated and bought off or else liquidated.

Such a policy stemmed from the supposition that Cuba, thousands of miles away from the socialist camp, could not receive any military aid and that the October 1962 commitment between the United States and the USSR, following the removal of the nuclear missiles from Cuba, has now lapsed after 20 years.

It is infuriating to witness the cynicism with which the right of a people to a free and sovereign existence is questioned and tied to the possibility that military aid may or may not be forthcoming from abroad in the event of aggression, or to the issue of whether or not a binding commitment is still in force. That commitment still exists and remains completely in effect. But the imperialists underestimate our people and overestimate themselves.

Our Revolution was not exported from abroad; we made it ourselves. (APPLAUSE) The arms with which we fought against the tyranny and defeated it didn't come to us from anywhere; they were U.S.-built and we captured them from the enemy. (APPLAUSE) Socialism was not exported to Cuba from any other country; we developed it ourselves. (AP-

PLAUSE) We made this Revolution with our own blood and we have defended it with our own blood. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) Not before or now or ever have we made or will we make sovereign decisions at the expense of others or thinking that others will fight for us. (APPLAUSE) Our philosophy since July 26, 1953 — it could be said since long before that, October 10, 1868 — is that we Cubans have always felt capable of fighting for our freedom and defending it. (APPLAUSE) Freedom is not a gift that can be given or bought. No people is entitled to it unless able to defend it on its own. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

We wouldn't have the privilege of calling ourselves revolutionaries or considering ourselves free unless we were convinced that we are more than capable of defending our nation and our Revolution from any enemy, no matter how powerful. A truly revolutionary and patriotic people may be physically swept off the face of the earth but can never be conquered. (APPLAUSE)

When the threats and the risk of Yankee military aggression against Cuba began anew, we didn't lose a minute in adopting the pertinent measures. Even before Reagan's inauguration, once he was elected president of the United States, our Party decided to set up the Territorial Troop Militia. (APPLAUSE) Over half a million men and women and tens of thousands of officers were organized, trained and armed in less than a year. The combat readiness of our armed forces grew considerably thanks to this effort and the simultaneous reception and assimilation of new combat equipment. The Revolutionary Armed Forces accomplished a true feat in rapidly structuring and preparing the Territorial Troop Militia. (APPLAUSE)

WE HAVE LIKEWISE DRAWN UP PLANS TO RESIST ANY NAVAL BLOCKADE, NO MATTER HOW LONG IT LASTS, AND WE HAVE PREPARED OURSELVES TO FACE ANY KIND OF AGGRESSION THE IMPERIALISTS MAY CONTRIVE

We have likewise drawn up plans to resist any naval blockade, no matter how long it lasts, and we have prepared ourselves to face any kind of aggression the imperialists may contrive. (APPLAUSE) Recently we staged the Bastión '83 strategic maneuvers, in which over 100 000 persons took part, including the principal Party, government and Revolutionary Armed Forces cadres, based on a supposed sudden

and massive attack. This evidenced how our people are seriously and efficiently prepared to resist aggression.

Out of the patriotism that grows in the face of danger, 1.8 million women, in a strong and moving gesture, have volunteered to join the Territorial Troop Militia. (APPLAUSE) The combat potential of our people, men and women alike, is now almost six million citizens. In the next 12 months an additional half million men and women plus 30 000 new officers will be joining the Territorial Troop Militia, well prepared, trained and armed. (APPLAUSE) In this case, since our men of military age are already part of the regular troops and reserves of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the current Territorial Troop Militia, or else are indispensable in production and services in case of war, the new units will be made up mainly of women, in a ratio of three to one in relation to men. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) In this way, one million additional combatants will be added to the existing armed forces and reserve troops.

Our people will be prepared to fiercely resist not just naval and airborne landing operations and defend the cities and positions to the last inch and the last man, but also to go on fighting even when the country has been invaded and occupied. (APPLAUSE) Every cadre of the Party, the state, the armed forces; every officer, every combatant, every citizen and even every teenager will know what to do under any circumstances. On every square meter of our cities and mountains, on every street, on every block, in every home in our cities, the enemy will be up against our combatants. (APPLAUSE)

Our Revolutionary Armed Forces are studying the terrain and, in coordination with the Party, People's Power and the mass organizations, are carrying out detailed and methodical preparation for this type of struggle. We will never forget our beginnings when with only seven rifles we took up the war against an 80 000-strong armed enemy. (APPLAUSE) Even if the main leaders of the Revolution had perished in the struggle, the resistance never would have stopped. (APPLAUSE)

In a territory that barely covers the surface area of Havana and Matanzas provinces, a few thousand Salvadoran patriots have brought more than 60 000 armed men to the brink of collapse. The genocidal regime's soldiers, national guardsmen, police and paramilitary troops wouldn't be able to keep fighting if it weren't for the avalanche of material support, political support and military advice supplied by the government of the United States. In Western Sahara, the Saharaui patriots fight in the desert against tens of thousands of Moroccan soldiers also supplied by the United States and

yet they hold 80 percent of the territory. In Lebanon, the Zionist aggressors are shaken by their losses caused almost daily by the growing Palestinian and Lebanese resistance. (APPLAUSE)

How many troops would imperialism need to occupy Cuba? Five million soldiers wouldn't be enough to confront hundreds of thousands, or even millions of determined and well-trained combatants and tens of thousands of officers and cadres fighting on their own soil under a single banner against a despicable foreign attack bent on destroying our Revolution and our country. (APPLAUSE) Here, with their soldiers pitted against ours, imperialism's nuclear weapons, dozens of divisions, thousands of planes and tanks, and hundreds of warships would be worth nothing. Our people, their patriotism, their spirit of struggle and their combat morale are what make up our invincible force, superior to any weapon or military technology that may exist. (APPLAUSE)

As we have said to many comrades, we would apply the formidable watchword of Maceo: "Whoever tries to conquer Cuba will gain nothing but the dust of her blood-soaked soil — if he doesn't perish in the struggle first!" (APPLAUSE) But in this case, the enemy would not gain the dust of our blood-soaked soil. He would perish first. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

That is our answer to the insolent Yankee threats.

And, in this area, not only is our country the object of threats and dangers, Nicaragua and Central America at large are seriously threatened by the same insane and aggressive policy. (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "VIVA NICARAGUA!")

In fact, the United States is already intervening in Nicaragua through thousands of former Somocista guards based, trained and supplied in Honduran territory. Support to the counterrevolution is openly declared by imperialism, which hasn't been able to hide it, although according to CIA jargon it is a secret war.

Hundreds of humble Nicaraguan patriots have lost their lives as a consequence of the U.S. government's crimes. The history of the Escambray Mountains and Playa Girón is being repeated with unparalleled cynicism against the sister people of Nicaragua.

Similarly the United States is intervening in El Salvador, supplying, training and advising the army of a genocidal regime which has murdered more than 40 000 Salvadorans.

The United States is intervening in Honduras, establishing land and air bases, undermining the civil government's

authority and openly turning it into an instrument of aggression against Nicaragua.

The historical causes of the problems of Central America are only too well-known, originating in prolonged and brutal domestic oppression and exploitation and the chain of U.S: interventions in those countries. Sandino's struggles in Nicaragua against U.S. occupation, the peasant insurrections of the '30s in El Salvador and the Guatemalan revolution smashed by the U.S. government in 1954 were developments that occurred many years before the Cuban Revolution, the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua and the current revolutionary process in El Salvador.

THE SITUATION IN THE CONVULSED CENTRAL AMERICAN REGION HAS AWAKENED VERY DEEP CONCERN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, INCLUDING THAT OF EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS ALLIED WITH THE UNITED STATES

The situation in the convulsed Central American region has awakened very deep concern throughout the world, including that of European governments allied with the United States. In our region, Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama took the initiative months ago to pursue politically negotiated solutions to the grave situation in the area. In a summit meeting held in Cancún on July 17, these countries, called the Contadora Group, issued a broad appeal to the countries of Central America which was extended to the United States and Cuba for support and cooperation in the search for a political solution.

Nicaragua responded July 19, accepting the initiation of immediate multilateral negotiations in the presence of the Contadora Group, with a six-point program including its willingness to sign a nonaggression pact with Honduras and its desire to reach an agreement regarding El Salvador based on a halt to the supply of all weapons to both opposing parties. Nicaragua's serious and dignified position excludes any kind of unilateral concession, capitulation or surrender in response to the pressure, threats and aggressions of the United States. But it expresses with complete clarity its willingness to discuss and resolve, within an honorable and principled context, the above mentioned points as well as any other point included in the declaration of the Contadora Group's presidents.

Cuba's answer to the presidents of the Contadora Group was equally rapid and clear. We unhesitatingly support their efforts in pursuit of a worthy and just negotiated

solution to the problems of Central America; we fully support Nicaragua's July 19 statements and express our willingness to cooperate with Nicaragua in order to achieve a negotiated political agreement on the area's problems.

The U.S. answer, apart from any formal statements, included an extremely aggressive speech given on July 18 by President Reagan against Nicaragua, which practically demanded the resignation of the Sandinista government; the hurried dispatchment of an aircraft carrier together with several warships to Nicaragua's Pacific coast; the announcement that another aircraft carrier, similarly escorted by warships, would be sent from the Mediterranean to Nicaragua's Atlantic coast, and the decision to conduct military maneuvers with thousands of U.S. soldiers in Honduran territory starting at the beginning of August. It's said the maneuvers include blockade exercises and will last six months. This kind of maneuvers, of such prolonged duration, is truly unusual. In reality it is an actual deployment of U.S. troops in Central America. Nicaragua is already essentially surrounded by U.S. warships and soldiers. The threats and pressures couldn't be more vulgar or more repugnant.

Nevertheless, we must be rational. We do not doubt in the least that the U.S. government has been trying deliberately in recent weeks to create an atmosphere of terror and insecurity regarding Nicaragua, increasing the pressure to the highest imaginable degree. But such measures are dangerous because the distance between this kind of psychological warfare and action has been reduced to the minimum. The irresponsible people advising Reagan may feel tempted to take new steps, making the situation irreversible.

Thus we are exceptional witnesses to the way in which the United States is moving towards an extremely serious mistake with incalculable consequences. The Nicaragua of 1983 is not the Nicaragua of 1926. A heroic and victorious people's revolution has involved the entire nation in the struggle, in spite of a tiny minority favoring the Somocistas and other counterrevolutionary forces. Patriotic, revolutionary fervor has grown with the external aggression and the people are more united than ever before in the history of that brave country. Nicaragua has no modern combat aviation nor armored equipment in abundance, and neither does it have enough artillery to face up to a large-scale act of aggression by the United States. But it does have the means to arm the people and this means many tens of thousands of fighters with a patriotic tradition and combat experience, capable of making life impossible for any aggressor, no matter how powerful. (APPLAUSE) The imperialists also underestimate the peoples of Central America.

I am convinced that the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran revolutionaries can never be subdued by force. (APPLAUSE) An attempt to crush the revolutions of Nicaragua and El Salvador by means of armed intervention would be like trying to cut out a tumor that would spread quickly all over the body of Central America. (APPLAUSE)

Just a year has passed since a NATO country, supported by the United States, waged war on a Latin American nation, constituting an affront and a humiliation to all the peoples in Our America. Now the United States, in a call to battle stations, is advancing its squadrons and troops in a threatening fashion against another Latin American nation. A new Vietnam in the heart of the American continent? May it never happen, and there's still time to avoid it! The peoples of Our America and the rest of the world would not sit back and observe a crime of such magnitude.

The same aggressive policy of the present U.S. administration is found everywhere in the world: in the Middle East, southern Africa, in the Indian Ocean and even in Europe, where the deployment of 572 medium-range strategic nuclear missiles is scheduled to take place soon. This is an unprecedented and unheard-of provocation against the socialist community. Amidst a frightening economic crisis, the arms race is raging with untold force.

We are living in risky and difficult times. The threat of confrontation is not only local; it is worldwide. We need nerves of steel, the greatest strength, the greatest mobilization of the peoples and an absolute determination not to yield to blackmail if we are to stop the aggressor, if we are to safeguard peace, if we are to survive.

TWO DAYS AGO WE CELEBRATED THE BICENTENNIAL OF SIMON BOLIVAR'S BIRTH. TO HIM, THE FATHER OF OUR AMERICA'S FREEDOM, WE WANT TO PAY SPECIAL TRIBUTE ON THIS OCCASION

Two days ago we celebrated the bicentennial of Simón Bolívar's birth. To him, the father of Our America's freedom, we want to pay special tribute on this occasion. (APPLAUSE)

Our America is still a long way from realizing Bolívar's dream. It is not the community of solidly united peoples that he set out to forge. The empire to the North, turbulent and brutal, has kept us balkanized and divided; more than a few of our peoples live under brutal fascist systems or

are subject to iron repression; illiteracy, unhealthy conditions, stark poverty, ruthless exploitation by transnational companies and reactionary oligarchies afflict nearly all of them to a greater or lesser extent. Even those of us who in recent years have undertaken profound revolutions are forced to fight against the legacy of a foreign domination that lasted for centuries. Nevertheless, the awareness of the American peoples is beginning to come alive. The Malvinas War made us all realize how cynical and opportunistic the U.S. government is, with its total lack of morals and the vulgar manner in which the imperialists are able to abandon their own commitments, and all this contributed to the awakening of the Americas. Fascism is in crisis and progressive, democratic ideas are advancing in the hearts and minds of the peoples.

In the struggle for this awakening of our awareness, the peoples of Central America this time have taken the lead. Today, there is still validity to Martí's words about the great Liberator, spoken on October 28, 1893: "Bolívar is there in the American heaven. . .vigilant and stern. . .wearing his campaign boots, because what he did not complete has yet to be accomplished; because Bolívar still has work to do in the Americas!" (APPLAUSE)

From this rostrum I hail the dauntless children of Sandino, (APPLAUSE) who smashed Somoza's army to bits and are unafraid of the United States' gross aggressions and threats to blockade and invade the country. I hail the admirable Salvadoran fighters, who have known how to check the imperialists' domination of their small nation and who astonish the world with their feats of war. (APPLAUSE) I hail the unselfish, tenacious Guatemalan patriots, who for over 20 years have been fighting against the genocidal regime imposed by the United States in 1954. (APPLAUSE) I hail the brave, determined Grenadians, who broke the chains of oppression and are building a just society. (APPLAUSE) I hail the courageous Chilean people, who unanimously are rising up against the fascist tyranny (APPLAUSE) and I hail the peoples in the Americas' Southern Cone who are fighting for their democratic liberties and for an end to repression and oppression. (APPLAUSE)

I hail all the peoples who in other continents are fighting in similar ways against the same imperialism: the brave Saharaui fighters; (APPLAUSE) our very dear friends the Palestinians; (APPLAUSE) the courageous Namibian patriots; (APPLAUSE) the brave, unyielding fighters in South Africa; (APPLAUSE) our sister peoples of Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique and other Front Line states who courageously are resisting the pressures, threats and attacks of the racists and the imperialists; (APPLAUSE) the Arab countries, which

are constant victims of imperialist and Zionist aggression; (APPLAUSE) and all the peoples of Asia and Africa who are confronting the underdevelopment, colonial exploitation and abysmal poverty left by centuries of exploitation past and present. (APPLAUSE)

With particular affection I hail the Soviet Union and all the socialist sister countries, (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) with deepest gratitude for the solidarity they gave us in crucial, difficult moments and for their constant support.

I hail working people everywhere in the world; those who fight for peace, who in all continents and in the heart of Europe, in Japan and in the United States itself are making intrepid efforts to stop the stupid arms race and avoid a worldwide holocaust that could mean the end of the human race. (APPLAUSE)

Today I wish to especially recall those comrades who died during the Moncada attack; (APPLAUSE) those who were persecuted and unjustly punished for their revolutionary struggles; those who were with us in Batista's prisons; those who went into exile with us and organized the **Granma** expedition; (APPLAUSE) the unforgettable fighters of the Sierra and the plains; (APPLAUSE) those who tenaciously defended the Revolution in the Escambray Mountains and at Playa Girón; (APPLAUSE) those who stood up to and defeated the plots, terrorist plans, acts of sabotage and crimes of the United States against our Revolution; (APPLAUSE) those who with honor raised the internationalist banners in Angola, Ethiopia and other parts of the world; (APPLAUSE) those who with their blood or sweat expressed the solidarity of our country, to the extent of their abilities, with the just causes and economic, technical and social needs of many other peoples; (APPLAUSE) the unselfish relatives of those who died or suffered, and those who had to weep over their loved ones in these long, glorious years of struggle. (APPLAUSE)

A grateful, deep and eternal recognition of our working people who with sacrifice, steadfastness and heroism made the ideas and program behind the Moncada attack their own and then carried them forward until they culminated in the most radical Revolution in our history and the establishment in Cuba of the first socialist state in the western hemisphere; (APPLAUSE) who not only were able to carry it out but who now defend it and are determined to defend it to the very last man or woman. (APPLAUSE)

Everlasting glory to the Cuban people and their heroic sons and daughters! (SHOUTS OF "GLORY!")

Everlasting glory to those who died for their country and the Revolution! (SHOUTS OF "GLORY!")

Everlasting glory to the ideas that made us revolutionaries and brought us freedom, justice, honor and victory! (SHOUTS OF "GLORY!")

Patria o muerte!

Venceremos!

(OVATION)

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